

What is claimed is:

S&W
1. In a video decoder, a system for acquiring program guide information conveyed on one of a plurality of broadcast channels, comprising the steps of:

selecting a program guide type from a plurality of different types of program guide;
associating a program guide of said selected program guide type with a broadcast channel by updating a database in said video decoder; and
acquiring a program guide of said selected program guide type.

2. A system according to claim 1, including the step of capturing packetized program information comprising a program conveyed on said broadcast channel using said acquired program guide.

3. A system according to claim 1, including the step of displaying a list of available programs and broadcast display times using information derived from said acquired program guide.

4. A system according to claim 1, wherein said different types of program guide comprise at least one of (a) program specific information, and (b) information contained in a vertical blanking interval of an analog type video signal.

5. A system according to claim 4, wherein said program specific information includes at least one of (i) information in ATSC compatible program specific information protocol (PSIP) format and (ii) information in MPEG compatible program specific information (PSI) format.

6. A system according to claim 4, wherein
said program specific information includes at least one of (a) program
map information including data for identifying individual packetized datastreams that
constitute a program, (b) program association information for associating a program
with data for identifying packets comprising associated program map information, (c)
network information for defining network parameters, (d) channel map information
associating channel identification numbers with one or more of, a carrier frequency,
transport stream identifier, service type and program number and (e) conditional
access information for use in accessing programs that are dependent upon user
entitlement.

7. A system according to claim 1, wherein
said broadcast channel comprises a physical transmission channel
(PTC).

8. A system according to claim 1, wherein said acquired program
guide,
links a transmission channel to a broadcast channel identification
number associated with an information provider and a group of sub-channels, and
links a sub-channel from among said group of sub-channels with a
second identification number.

9. A system according to claim 8, wherein
said associating step associates said selected program guide with a
transmission channel;
said acquiring step acquires a program guide for use in capturing a
program conveyed on a broadcast sub-channel, and
said capturing step captures packetized program information
comprising a program conveyed on said broadcast sub-channel.

10. A system according to claim 1, including the step of
automatically scanning through received broadcast channels and
identifying and acquiring an available program guide for individual channels.

11. A system according to claim 1, including the step of automatically scanning through received channels and identifying and acquiring a plurality of program guides for an individual channel.

12. In a video decoder, a system for acquiring packetized program information comprising a program conveyed on one of a plurality of broadcast channels, comprising the steps of:

scanning through received broadcast channels to identify program guides available on individual channels;

selecting an identified program guide conveyed on an individual broadcast channel;

acquiring said selected program guide; and

capturing packetized program information comprising a program conveyed on said individual broadcast channel using said acquired program guide.

13. A system according to claim 12, including the step of automatically examining data received on an individual broadcast channel to identify available program guides of different type.

14. A system according to claim 13, wherein

said program guides of different type includes guides comprising two or more of (a) information in ATSC compatible program specific information protocol (PSIP) format and (b) information in MPEG compatible program specific information (PSI) format, and (c) information contained in a vertical blanking interval of an analog type video signal.

15. A system according to claim 12, including the step of examining data received on an individual broadcast channel to identify available program guides of different type wherein said data is examined to identify program guides of particular type in a predetermined order.

16. A system according to claim 15, wherein

said data is examined to identify firstly a digitally coded program guide and then an analog video data program guide.

17. A system according to claim 12, including the step of associating a selected program guide with a corresponding individual broadcast channel of said received broadcast channels for identification and use of said associated selected program guide in acquiring said individual broadcast channel.

18. In a video decoder, a system for acquiring packetized program information comprising a program conveyed on one of a plurality of broadcast channels, comprising the steps of:

tuning to receive an individual broadcast channel of said plurality of broadcast channels;

examining data received on said individual broadcast channel to determine program guide availability;

selecting an available program guide conveyed on said individual broadcast channel;

acquiring said selected program guide; and

capturing packetized program information comprising a program conveyed on said individual broadcast channel using said acquired program guide.

19. A system according to claim 18, wherein in said examining step includes the step of

examining data received on said individual broadcast channel to identify available program guides of different type.

20. In a video decoder, a system for acquiring program guide information on one of a plurality of broadcast channels, comprising the steps of:

determining from a decoder database if a program guide is associated with an individual broadcast channel, in response to a user channel change command;

examining data received on said individual broadcast channel to determine program guide availability in response to an absence of a program guide being associated with said individual broadcast channel; and

acquiring an available program guide.

21. A system according to claim 20, including the step of capturing packetized program information comprising a program conveyed on said individual broadcast channel using said acquired program guide.

22. A system according to claim 20, including the step of examining data received on said individual broadcast channel to identify program guide type.

23. A system according to claim 20, wherein said step of determining from a decoder database if a program guide is associated with an individual broadcast channel is performed in response to a user request to add a broadcast channel to a set of viewable channels.